SUBJECT: Report on the Conversation at Linz on January 10 and 11, 1956, with Rudolf Winter (Baron) von Schwab, resident of 46 Rudolfgasse, Urfahr, Upper Austria

Baron von Schwab told drafting officer the following details about his past: He was born December 5, 1919, at Jimbolga (Hungary now Rumania), but his family moved soon to Linz where he was educated. He is an Austrian citizen. In 1939, he was drafted into the German Army and served in an armored (Panzer) division until almost the end of the war. In 1945, returned to Linz and took up quarters in Urfahr and soon married a Linz girl. They have a girl eight years old whose Godfather was an American officer of an MI Detachment. From October 1946 until the date of his kidnaping on August 21, 1949, by Soviet Counter Intelligence men at Eferding, Upper Austria, he worked for the 430 Hq. Det. CIC in Linz, Upper Austria. His chiefs were Messrs. Rinessen, Lucid, and Allan. He appeared to recall these names with certain amount of affection. The highlights of his capture by the Soviets were the following: Motoring on August 21, 1949, on an official trip near the German frontier he was held up by a Soviet vehicle and dragged out of the car. Realizing that he fell into the hands of Soviet agents, he put up a stiff resistance and killed one of his would-be abductors. A Soviet agent thereupon hit him with an iron bar on the head and crushed his skull. (Von Schwab showed drafting officer a wound on the right side of his skull.) He was taken from there in unconscious condition to Urfahr and later to a Soviet hospital at St. Poelten, where he was treparned and the crushed skull bones removed. The operation, which he called "the work of shoemakers," left his left side paralyzed. He still drags his left leg and cannot use his left arm. He was held in St. Poelten until November 15 when he was strong enough to be transported to Baden bei Wien to another Soviet Army hospital. On the first day at that hospital, i.e., November 15, he made an effort to escape by jumping from the first floor window but was caught and put under surveillance. On December 29, 1949, a Soviet Army court sentenced him to death under Articles 58/4, 58/6, 58/11, and 58/14 of the Soviet Criminal Code and under the "War Criminal Ukase," but the sentence was commuted by a "Stalin clemency" to 25 years of forced labor. On December 31, 1949, he was taken to the Soviet Army prison at Neunkirchen, Burgenland. He was held there until June 1950. In July, 1950, he was taken to another Soviet Army jail at Lwow (Lemberg), Poland. He was there until May 1951, when he was transported in chains to Camp 215/50, near Taishet, East Siberia. A few days after his arrival there, his forced-labor sentence was changed to 25 years in prison and was taken to Tshaliabinsk, S. Ural. A few weeks later, he was moved to a special prison for political prisoners at Werchne-Uralsk, near Magnetogorsk, S. Ural. In December 1952, he was taken to Lubyanka prison in Moscow. He arrived there sick, feverish, and had delirious collapses. Then in September 1953, he was moved to the Putirsky prison in Moscow, which had a sick ward. There the Soviet doctors experimented on von Schwab by what they called "draining of the brain fluid." They inserted a long needle into his spine and drained off the fluid. They then forced oxygen into the space thus gained. The pressure of the oxygen was almost unbearable, and Schwab believes that it was done for getting him to confess. In the cell, he had a cellmate, Trepper, supposedly a colonel in the French Army. Von Schwab says that he looked Jewish and suspected that he was sent to his cell in order to spy on him. Since Schwab did not speak French, he could not establish whether Trepper was French. The other jails where von Schwab spent time in Soviet Russia were: September 1953 - Tsheljabin Magnitogorsk; October 1953 to March 1954 - Werchne-Uralsk; March 1954 - Irkutsk, East Siberia; April 1954 to May 1955 - the special political prison at Alexandrowsk (about 70 kilometers from Irkutsk).

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Between June 1955 and November 13, 1955, von Schwab was moved to the following jails in the following sequence: Novosibirsk (one week); Sverdlovsk (four days); Kirow (one day); Gorkij (four days); Vladimir and the Butyrskaya jail in Moscow, where he was prepared for repatriation. His transport left Moscow on November 13, 1955, arrived at Vienna via Hungary November 16, 1955. While in Butyrskaya jail, he was permitted to send his only and first open post card to his wife in Austria.

As to his career in the German Army, von Schwab said that he was called up for service in 1939, was promoted to second lieutenant in December 1942. He saw service in France and Soviet Russia.

Von Schwab was willing to give information on Americans held in Soviet captivity. He appeared to be highly nervous in retrospect of his Soviet life and at times worked himself into such rage that he had to be calmed down. He appears to hate Communism as the worst enemy of humanity and declared repeatedly that he is willing to offer everything for combatting this sore of humanity. He was worried at times about being seen in the company of an American. He was afraid even of his sister-in-law, whom drafting officer met at the time when he called on him in Urfahr. In order to misspell any suspicion that he was an American, he greeted him as an old friend from Lubyanka prison. Officer used on introduction the alias of "Emmerich" as suggested by Mr. Braunerhielm. Von Schwab told officer that he was receiving a number of letters from Austrian Communists threatening his life and showed to me the Linz Communist paper which displayed his photograph.

During the conversations, Baron von Schwab mentioned names of the following persons who were held in Soviet forced-labor camps or in jails. He emphasized, however, that the names do not mean much in Soviet jails because some of the prisoners have aliases and are known under that name. The names listed below will be of those persons whom he actually met in Soviet Russia. Where von Schwab learned of the case histories through other sources, it is so stated in the report.

Case No. 1.

In August 1950, Schwab met at the Taishet "Distribution Camp" a person known by the first name of "Roman," allegedly an American citizen of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His family name was unknown to Schwab, and everybody called him by his first name in camp. Roman said that he was radio operator aboard a boat (nationality unknown) and was taken off the boat and arrested sometime during the summer of 1940 at Odessa; was sentenced for an unknown crime to 10 years in prison. He appeared to be (in 1950) about 34 to 36 years of age. Roman, according to his story, was transferred to forced-labor camp at Krasnoyarsk; was made a "free laborer" but was re-arrested in September 1953 for having sent a food package to a French Political Officer somewhere in Soviet Russia. Roman claimed that he personally knew "Old Foster," the American Communist. He was about 172 centimeters tall (5 ft. 9 in.) with brownish skin, had dark eyes and hair, spoke good Russian and American English. He was of the melancholy type, loved American songs and always whistled one of the tunes. He was a handsome type and friendly.

Case No. 2.

In December 1950, he met at the Taishet Camp in East Siberia (between Krasnoyarsk and Irkutsk) Jim [illegible], about 24 or 26 years old, 172 centimeters tall (5 ft.

9 in.), single, of partly Jewish descent, who had rosy cheeks, a longish face and nose. His eyes were, to Schwab's best recollection, of brown color. His hair, which was closely cropped, as those of Soviet prisoners, appeared to be dark. He was in very poor physical condition and had sores all over his body caused by beatings. In spite of his physical condition, Lerner was always cheerful and optimistic as to his release. He was an intellectual type of prisoner, interested in everything. His father, he said, was an American citizen of Russian descent, his mother, a native American. The father of Jim Lerner was educated in the American college in Tokyo and also worked there for an undisclosed number of years. Jim Lerner claimed that he had a brother serving as lieutenant colonel in the American Air Force in California. Jim Lerner was arrested in 1949 in Tsingtao, a port city near Port Arthur, where he worked as conductor of a jazz orchestra. His arrest was made during the summer of 1950, allegedly by the Chinese, who turned him over to the Soviet authorities. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison for espionage after a long investigation by the Soviet authorities at Vladivostok. He claimed that he denied everything in connection with espionage and told the Russians that he was only a musician and interested only in music. Lerner spoke good Russian, Japanese and English with an American accent. Schwab got very fond of him on account of his intellectual standing and spent three weeks with him in the Taishet Camp. Lerner was taken with a prisoner transport in January 1951 to a forced-labor camp somewhere near Bradsk, but von Schwab did not know its exact location.

(The distance between Taishet and Bradsk, according to von Schwab was about 400 kilometers. There was a railroad connecting the two cities. All the forced-labor camps in that area of a circle of about 400 kilometers diameter were numbered 215 with an additional number indicating the camp. In that area, therefore, there were a number of 215 forced-labor camps numbered from 1 to about 35.)

Case No. 3.

Ralph GROTCAST met him in December 1950 or January 1951 in Taishet Camp. From there Grotcast was moved in March 1951 to forced-labor camp 215/7, which was about 124 kilometers away from Taishet in the direction of Bradsk. This camp was supposed to be on or near the Juda River, and Grotcast was supposed to be there until May 1951. When von Schwab met Grotcast, he appeared to be 65 years old. His father, said Grotcast, was a German emigrant who specialized in railroad building. They lived in San Francisco, California. Ralph Grotcast most likely studied chemistry, as he called himself a food research specialist who spent considerable time in studying sugar beet growing. Before the Second World War, Grotcast was invited by the German Government (exact year not known) to come to Germany and study food-production problems. He lived in Magdeburg, where he wrote a book or pamphlet on "The Progress of Sugar Production and Culture." After the United States declared war on Germany, Ralph Grotcast was interned by the Germans and was sent to a camp for aliens at Laufen near Salzburg. From there, he was sent in 1944 to a concentration camp in Northwest Germany. While there, he was asked by the German Government to study the problems of utilizing swamp land. He was liberated by the American forces, went back to Magdeburg, Saxony, where he left his scientific papers with a certain Frau Studienrat Scherer or Schaeringer (von Schwab was not sure of the name) residing at Augusta Strasse 44. Frau Scherer or Schaeringer was the sister of Grotcast's deceased bride. Magdeburg being in the Soviet Zone of Germany, the Communist Government there offered Grotcast every facility for studying food production and fodder production for animals, but he refused the offer. He remained in Magdeburg for a while, taught at the University at Halle, but was suspected of being anti-Communist and of having been

mixed up in the foundation of "The Friends of America" underground club. He was arrested by the Soviet authorities in 1949, charged with espionage. While under investigation, he was again asked by the Soviet authorities to cooperate with them and was made high offers of scholarship, of laboratory facilities and everything due to a scientist. Grotcast, who spoke no Russian, allegedly told his Soviet captors, "I am a free American and I am not going to work as a slave." The Russians respected his stand and treated him well. He was not beaten or harmed in any other way, but, in spite of that, he steadfastly refused to work for the Russians even while in camp. According to Grotcast, he had no family and was supposed to have lived between 1905 and 1910 in Galveston, Texas, where he tried to grow rice but lost all his money in the experiments. Identifying features: one eye missing, wore a glass eye, gray hair, well-cut features, straight nose, bluish-gray eyes and a sports-manlike appearance, which did not make him look older than about 50. His hobby was the study of history and of food production; spoke very often of Napoleon as his favorite subject; spoke cultured English, German, Italian, French and even Hungarian but had no knowledge of Russian or any other Oriental languages.

Case No. 4.

Paul UNITSCHENKO. Von Schwab knew the latter during January and February 1951 at Taishet and later in Infirmary No. 1 near Taishet, where he was sent with a gastric ailment. Unitschenko was in a pretty poor state of health, and von Schwab thinks he may have died since then. His father was a Ukrainian emigrant, who served in the White Russian Army. As a child, Paul Unitschenko lived for some time at Shanghai. Von Schwab was not sure of the place of his birth. Unitschenko returned to the Far East sometime before the War and shipped as captain of a coast-wise tramp steamer. Between 1942 and 1945, he allegedly was in the service of a United States Merchant Marine ship somewhere in the Far East. After the War, he made some money and married a Swiss national somewhere in the Far East or in China. In 1948, he was captain of a Soviet steamboat navigating the River Yenisseï. His expert knowledge of river navigation made his services valuable to the Soviet authorities, and they paid him a very good salary. He was arrested for espionage in 1949 and sentenced to 25 years in jail. His wife, a former Swiss national, was somewhere in the Far East but not in Soviet captivity. Unitschenko spoke fluent but uncultured English. He tried to show off and show himself to be a better type and not the roughneck type he was. He was the happy-go-lucky American GI type and was greatly appreciated as a good comrade among the prisoners. He was about 175 centimeters tall, lean, had a thin face, an early graying hair, spoke good Russian. He was a sick man, however, and could not do heavy physical work. He was often seen loading his meals.

Case No. 5.

Murray FIELDS alias Michael FEINGERSH, as known in camp, was of Jewish descent. Von Schwab met him the first time in May 1951 in the political prison at Tchitabinsk (South Ural) and then later in July 1951 in the prison at Werchne-Uralsk. Later, in May 1955, once more in the political prison of Alexandrowsk near Irkutsk in East Siberia. Fields alias Feingersh told von Schwab that his parents lived near New York City. He was (in 1955) about 35 years old, single, about 180 centimeters tall, good figure, thin, long, handsome face, dark eyes and longish nose. He had father and mother living in New York State near New York City, where his father was supposed to be a broker, a well-to-do businessman. (Mr. Schwab could not recall the name of the city.) Feingersh often referred to the servants they had in their house. He

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went to high school in his home town but did not graduate; he had many jobs but never stuck to any of them. Among others, he worked also for the Hearst (papers?) press, was clever with pen and brush but hated physical work. He came to Europe in 1946 and joined the U.S. Army, rose to the rank of sergeant, served in an armored division and later in the Constabulary somewhere in South Bavaria. He had many doubtful business deals with certain person in South Bavaria with the name of "Siegfried." On account of his business deals, he was arrested by the U.S. Army, was under investigation, but escaped to Czechoslovakia, where he was caught and delivered in March 1948 to the Soviet authorities. He was taken to the Soviet Headquarters in Baden bei Wien, where he was under investigation for over two years and finally sentenced to 25 years for espionage. In Baden he was so badly beaten by his captors that he had epileptic fits from time to time, and once jumped out of a prison window. He did not appear to be normal but was well-liked by his fellow prisoners as a good comrade. In Neunkirchen jail in Burgenland, von Schwab overheard him call out loud from the window, "I am an American Communist, and if I'm released they (the U.S. authorities) would jail me." He spoke good English, poor German, no Yiddish. His grandfather and grandmother were said to be Russian emigrants.

Case No. 6.

Jim FABIAN. Von Schwab met him in 1950 and judged his age then to be about 28. He was about 182 centimeters tall, had prominent features, but one-half of his face showed burns, which Fabian explained was the result of a place accident and fire when he served as first Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force. After the War, Fabian allegedly worked for the MIS, but von Schwab was not sure of that assignment. His father was owner of a small manufacturing plant in the United States, place unknown. He was arrested in Czechoslovakia sometime between 1947 and 1948 when he went to visit his grandfather, who allegedly lived somewhere near Praha; was sentenced to 15 or 20 years forced labor. Von Schwab met him only once in October 1950 in Camp 215/20 when he worked as a horse groom of the camp, walked with a cane, allegedly on account of a broken leg. Sometime early in November of that year, Fabian was shipped out to an unknown camp.

Case No. 7.

In August 1950 von Schwab met a war invalid by the name of John or Ivan, whose last name he couldn't learn. Ivan, as he was called in camp, was born around 1918 in Chicago, spoke English, Ukrainian, and Russian. He had an aunt in Chicago; went to work as a mechanic in the Soviet Union in the late '30's, was arrested as a spy suspect but was freed and inducted into the Soviet Army on account of his parentage. He was wounded in the War, and, in consequence, his right arm was crippled. After the War, in 1945, he made efforts to go back to the United States but was arrested and sentenced to 10 years in prison. While there, he told his keepers that he had an aunt in Chicago who died sometime during the War, leaving him an estate of $3,000. He offered the $3,000 to the Soviet Government in exchange for an exit permit; the Soviet Government made him sign a power of attorney to collect, but he was never freed. Ivan told von Schwab that he suspected that the Soviet Government collected the $3,000 long ago.

Case No. 8.

A Russian woman from Moscow allegedly married to a member of the staff of the American Embassy. Von Schwab saw her in late 1953 and in February 1954 when she was in the prison of Werchne-Uralsk. Von Schwab described her as a youngish person, about 20 to 24, and rather good looking. She called down from her prison cell window in Russian imploring that the American Embassy Moscow be informed of her whereabouts and of her status. She claimed to have received a 25-year sentence for treason.

Case No. 9.

An Armenian-American from Chicago, whose name von Schwab could not recall, whom he knew in Camp 215/20 in September and October 1950. He described him as a very tall person, lean figure, dark hair, walking with a bent posture, "features of an eagle's beak," allegedly a shoe manufacturer from Chicago, Illinois. The Armenian left Chicago in 1949 and had shoe-manufacturing equipment sent to the Armenian Soviet Republic. He allegedly owned a lavish house at Chicago with about 40 rooms and received his visa to proceed to the Soviet Republic at the Consulate in New York. When his visa was granted, he was assured by the Soviet authorities that his American citizenship would be respected in the Soviet Republic. He proceeded to Erivan, the capital of the Armenian Soviet Republic, and built a shoe factory and installed the machinery. According to his story, his motives in doing so were idealistic as he wished to help the Armenian people in their endeavors to create a better life for them. Soon after that, about 1950 or 1951, he was arrested by the Soviet authorities, charged with nationalistic subversive tendencies and sentenced to 25 years in prison. He claimed not to be a Communist.

Case No. 10.

Dr. Max LOEWENSOHN, a lawyer, Jewish, allegedly born in Riga, Latvia, about 72 years old, studied law at Heidelberg University, Germany, emigrated to the United States in 1905, served in the U.S. Army in World War I, naturalized American citizen, claimed to have gone to Soviet Russia in the early twenties with a Jewish organization to help poor Jews in Soviet Russia. He claimed to have been arrested at the time of the Trotsky trials.

Case No. 11.

EHRLICH (first name unknown), an engineer of Jewish descent. Von Schwab met Ehrlich in Taishet Camp hospital in February 1951 and described him as having been then about 48 years old, tall, about 180 centimeters high, clean-cut features, very intelligent, an engineer by profession, and U.S. citizen. Von Schwab believes that he was an American Communist born in Soviet Russia who, with his brother, emigrated to the United States in about 1918. He often talked about his brother, whose name was Max, living at 36 Maxwell Street, Toledo, Ohio. Ehrlich returned to the Soviet Union about 1935 on some engineering project, was soon arrested in connection with the engineers' conspiracy case (National Trudsoyuz) in the middle thirties and was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Ehrlich, according to von Schwab, spoke very good English.

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Case No. 12.

The following Americans claimed to be in Soviet captivity were not directly seen by von Schwab. One of these, allegedly called Brown-Clifford (first name unknown), was said to be about 27 years old when he died in 1953 in the political prison of Werchne-Uralsk. He was described to von Schwab as dark-haired, well-built, lean individual, well-educated, melancholic, who went on a hunger strike in 1953 and starved himself to death. According to his fellow prisoners, Brown-Clifford often talked about Hamburg but no reason why was given. He was under a 25-year prison sentence for espionage.

Von Schwab heard of six or eight American citizens interned in the Workuta concentration camp district, near the Arctic Sea. He could not mention names, but described one of them as an individual kidnapped by the Soviets in 1949 in Berlin. The second is alleged to be a captain in the U.S. Army, naturalized American citizen of Dutch descent, about 33 years old (in 1951) when he was seen by one of von Schwab's prison mates.

About the treatment of prisoners in jails and forced-labor camps, von Schwab said that the treatment was very bad until about the death of Stalin in 1953, but there was a noticeable improvement in prisoner treatment after that.

Case No. 13.

In the Werchne-Uralsk jail in 1951 and 1952, von Schwab claimed to have met Sot Ivanovich Chepurnykh, who claimed to have been the Soviet Vice Consul in New York between 1944 and 1949. He claimed to have served there under Consul General Lomakin. He mentioned to von Schwab the Kasenkina case, which he witnessed in New York. Vice Consul Chepurnykh had three children, all girls, the first about 13 years old (in 1951), the second, seven years, and the third, about three or four years old, the latter born in New York. He told von Schwab that his daughter was born in the "Marcel Hospital" in New York City and that she was baptized Nadia (or Victoria, von Schwab could not remember which). The Vice Consul requested von Schwab, if released, to contact the American authorities and tell them, whatever happens to him and his wife, that his daughter who was born in the U.S. be taken to America and brought up there as a free American citizen. The Vice Consul, whom von Schwab described as a tall, blonde, blue-eyed individual, was born in 1911 of old Russian Orthodox parents. His wife's family lived at Ulica Voroshilow in Rostow on the Don. According to Vice Consul Chepurnykh, he was recalled from New York in 1949 and sailed from America via a Mexican Gulf port on a freighter which shipped a big load of bananas. He arrived in Leningrad with his wife and children on October 15, 1949, arrived in Moscow the next day, where he was arrested by the MVD the following night with his wife. They were under investigation in Lubyanka Prison for almost a year. His wife was sentenced to 10 years forced labor, he under Article 58/1 A of the Soviet Criminal Code to 25 years in prison for espionage and anti-Soviet activities. The children, whom he has not seen since their arrest, were allegedly put up in three seperate children's homes. Vice Consul Chepurnykh spoke very bitterly about the American author, Howard Fast, who, he claimed, was the man who betrayed him to the Soviet authorities, in spite of the fact that it was he (the Vice Consul) who kept him on the Soviet payroll and paid him his regular monthly dues. He added that he would kill Howard Fast on sight if he should ever be set free.

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Vice Consul Chepurnykh mentioned also the son of singer Paul Robeson, who was allegedly being educated in the Soviet Union.

Von Schwab offered the following names as witnesses as to the veracity of his statements concerning Americans in the Soviet Union who served with him prison sentences: Heinz KRILL - Vienna; Franz SCHROLLENBERGER, somewhere in Lower Austria; Josef MIESS, Gmuend, Lower Austria. These returned to Austria in June 1955 and had known most of the individuals discussed in this report; and, also, a German National SUPRA (first name unknown) of Kotbus near Berlin. Von Schwab could not recall their addresses but said that the addresses, if necessary, could be obtained through the appropriate section of the Ministry of the Interior which kept track of returnees.

Von Schwab requested the drafting officer to relay to the American authorities the request that he be permitted to go to the American Zone in Germany and be put up in an American hospital for a complicated nerve and skull operation, which he could not get at present in impoverished Austria. He claims that at the Austrian Fuersorge prescribed him so far only sedatives to mitigate pain. He told the drafting officer that he has considerable and interesting material to impart to the American authorities concerning the location of industrial plants in Soviet Russia. He started to tell drafting officer certain details of the Soviet industrial establishment but was told that drafting officer was not interested in the material and was interested only in the whereabouts of American citizens in Soviet Russia. Von Schwab said that he did not mean to tell the Americans of Soviet industrial establishments in exchange for medical treatment, but said that he would like to be attended by an American doctor, if that is possible, somewhere in the American Zone in Germany. He said that he could obtain passport from the Austrian authorities any time he wanted and could proceed to any spot in Western Europe.

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